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JAMAICA, ff.

To the KING's Most Excellent MAJESTY
in Council.

The Humble MEMORIAL and PETITION of the
COUNCIL and ASSEMBLY of JAMAICA.

MOST GRACIOUS SOVEREIGN,

WE, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal Subjects, the Council and Assembly of *Jamaica*, most humbly implore Your paternal Attention to this our faithful Representation of the many Grievances and Distresses under which the People of this Your Majesty's Colony of *Jamaica* now labour, and the consequential Ruin in which they must be involved, unless speedily redressed. Conscious, that we have, in every Instance, endeavoured to render ourselves worthy of Your Majesty's Regard, and deserving of the utmost Attention and Favour of the Parent State; and knowing, that some of our Grievances can be removed *only* by the *British* Legislature; we presume to request of Your Majesty, to recommend to Your Parliament a cool, deliberate Investigation of our Situation; not doubting that it will lead to such Regulations as will afford us immediate Relief, and establish this Colony on such a Footing as may tend to its further Improvement, the Benefits of which cannot but centre ultimately in the Mother Country.

The heavy Taxes imposed during the Course of the late unhappy War, for the Purpose of building permanent as well as temporary Fortifications; the great Expence of Martial Law for a considerable Space of Time, whilst we were under perpetual Alarms of Invasion; the withdrawing the Labour of the Slaves, as well as the Attention of the Proprietors and Managers, from the Cultivation of the Lands, have fixed such a Load of Debt on the Property of this Island, as will require many Years to discharge, even under the most favourable Circumstances.

The Visitations of the Almighty, by Three dreadful Storms in the Space of Four Years, having brought the deepest Distress on many of the Inhabitants of this Colony, gave us Reason to expect that our Situation under these Sufferings would have entitled us to the Aid and Assistance of the Parent

A

State.—

State.—We readily acknowledge the Grant of Parliament, in *January* One thousand Seven hundred and Eighty-one, for the Relief of the Sufferers in the Storm of One thousand Seven hundred and Eighty; but it was almost as a Drop of Water to the Ocean, in Comparison to the Distress: Besides which, in *March* immediately following, the Commons of *Great Britain* remunerated themselves by a Tax of Four Shillings and Eight Pence *per* Hundred Weight on our Muscovado, which, with the former Duties, amounts to about Eight Pounds Sterling *per* Hogshead, being nearly as much as the greater Part of Sugar, at present, netts to the Planter. The additional Drawback of Eleven Shillings and Six Pence *per* Hundred Weight on Exportation of Refined Sugars, and Five Shillings and Six Pence on Bastards, which is expressed to be by Way of Compensation for the above Tax, we apprehend, has only the Operation of making the Planter the Object of Taxation, and the Refiner the Object of Relief.

We must further represent, That, besides the Calamity of Storms, that sweep away in an Hour the Labour of Years, a great Part of the South Side of the Island is subject to long and severe Droughts; which, though not so immediate in their Effects, yet deprive the Planter of the Fruits of his Labour, and often compel him to resort to a foreign Supply for Food for himself and his Slaves. These natural Evils we must submit to; and, as they are unavoidable, we are led to hope, from Your Majesty's equal Care for all Your faithful Subjects, and from the fostering Hand of the Parent State, which, we are bold to say, the People of this Island deserve, that the Burthens under which they labour will be so far alleviated as to afford a present comfortable Subsistence, with a Prospect of emerging from that Load of Debt which far the greater Part of the Planters have necessarily incurred.

With great Submission, we beg Leave to represent the distressing Burthen of the heavy Duties laid on our Staples, particularly the last-mentioned, of Four Shillings and Eight Pence, imposed at a Time when the Island was struggling under the Calamities of a War that perpetually threatened Invasion, and whilst a great Part of the Island was suffering the dreadful Effects of a desolating Storm: And we cannot but observe, that the Mode of collecting the Duties increases the Burthen, the Importer being obliged to provide for the Payment immediately; which forces the greatest Part of the Quantity imported into the Market on Landing, and consequently throws it into the Hand of the Monopolist, at his own Price.

We are not unmindful of the late Remission of Two Shillings *per* Gallon Duty on Rum; but, we apprehend, the Planter will receive very little Benefit from it, as the remaining Duties are still so high as to keep that Article out of the Reach of the People in general, and to leave the Temptation open to smuggling of Brandy. As the Production of Rum in the *British* Colonies is more than equal to the Demand in *Great Britain*, *Ireland*, and the *British* Colonies in *America*, it is only an Increase of Consumption equal to that Production, that can be of Advantage to the Planter.

Whilst

Whilst struggling with these Difficulties, the Peace took place, and afforded some Alleviation of our Distress by the Admission of *American Vessels*; but this Benefit we had enjoyed a very short Time, when the Proclamation of the Second of *July*, One thousand Seven hundred and Eighty-three, arrived, prohibiting the *Americans* trading to the Sugar Colonies:—It is with Astonishment we behold such a Restriction, when, at the same Time, the *Americans* are invited to trade, and enter into the Ports of *Great Britain*, *Ireland*, and the Northern *British* Colonies. We can boldly say, such invidious Distinction has not been merited; and will therefore flatter ourselves that it arose not from Design: And, as we understand the Regulations of Trade with *America* are to be discussed in Parliament immediately after *Christmas*, we beg Leave to represent, that on the Terms which may be adopted, depends the Existence of this Country as a Sugar Colony. The Sugar Islands have been settled, and have grown with their Sister Colonies on the Continent of *America*;—their Interests are so united, the Reciprocity of Trade is such, that perhaps, without it, neither would have arrived at their present Consequence; most certainly the Sugar Colonies could not;—the Locality renders Navigation between them so easy and expeditious; the Productions of the former are so proper and well adapted for supporting and carrying on, with any Prospect of Advantage, the Settlements of the latter, and so absolutely necessary, in Cases of Emergency, for the Preservation of the Inhabitants, that, without such an Intercourse of Trade, the Sugar Colonies must sink into Ruin.

Far be it from us even to wish such an Extension of that Intercourse, as could in any Way injure the Advantages arising to *Great Britain* from the Carrying Trade, or the Consumption of her Manufactures. We are sensible that our Protection depends on the superior Power of the *British* Navy: And, though we presume it may be proved, that a Permission of unlimited Trade with the United States could not, in the present Circumstances of Things, in the smallest Degree injure the Interests of the Parent State; yet we only desire the Permission, under such Restrictions as will keep it within the Compass of furnishing this Island with such Articles as the United States of *America* only can supply, on Terms that will enable us to carry on our Estates with a Prospect of Benefit equal to the Support of our Families: And we can with Confidence say, that, without this Permission, there can be no other Regulations of Trade, that will prevent the throwing out of the Line of Sugar Estates, a great Part of the Lands at present cultivated in Canes.

Deprived of this Trade, in all Probability, such Planters who have it in their Power will emigrate with their Families and Slaves to happier Countries; and those who cannot, as honest Men, take this Step, of which the Number is great, must remain unhappy Spectators of their Properties mouldering into Ruin, themselves and Families reduced to Indigence and Want; and this must be the unavoidable Fate of the Proprietors of small Sugar Estates (the Generality of which have been settled partly on Credit) who,

with the strictest Oeconomy, and a constant Residence on their Properties, and under the most favourable Circumstances this Island has ever experienced, have with Difficulty supported and preserved them: Many large Estates also stand in the same Predicament from Locality, such as long Carriage, Sterility of Soil, Droughts, &c. and perhaps a heavy Debt.

We beg Leave further to represent, That the *Americans* did before the War, and no Doubt will again, take, in Payment for the Supplies they import, the Surplus of our Rum; we mean such Part as *Great Britain, Ireland,* and the *British* Northern Colonies, cannot consume; which, unless thrown into the *American* Market, must remain on our Hands: It needs no Argument to evince the ruinous Consequence this must produce. During the War, we did not feel the Want of that Market; the Number of Troops in *America*, and the great Naval Power *Britain* supported, created a Consumption equal to the Surplus. By the Account of Exports (N^o 1.) taken from the Books of the Naval Office, it appears that, before the War, the Consumption of our Rum was increasing considerably in *America*, but that of Sugar very little; and whilst the *French* can afford to undersell us, there is little Probability of their taking more from our Island: Consequently, neither the Carrying Trade, nor the Revenue of *Great Britain*, can be injured by the Revival of this Intercourse with *America*, in any Degree worth Notice; nay, we have shewn that the Exclusion would very soon lower the Produce of this Island, much more than to the Amount of any Exportation that ever has been to *America*.

It has been asserted, that *Great Britain*, together with the Colonies of *Canada, Nova Scotia,* and *Saint John*, are able to supply the *British* Sugar Colonies with all such Articles as they stand in Need of from the United States, and that it was done during the War: We beg Leave to represent, that the Accident of *American* Captures, for that Period, afforded many of those Articles; that, notwithstanding there were sometimes large Importations of Flour from the Parent State, it did not answer the Purpose; that Article not keeping for any Length of Time in this Climate: It has happened that the Merchant Importer has sustained a Loss on the Sales, and the Inhabitants were not benefited by it; at other Times, Flour has sold at Fourteen Pounds *per* Barrel. And this must ever be the Case with an *European* Supply, as far the greatest Number of Ships in the Trade, take their Departure from *Great Britain*, so as to arrive here just in Time for the Crops: It necessarily follows, that the Importation will be great at that Season; and if there should be a Quantity of Flour nearly equal to the Demand for a Year, a great Part of it will perish before it is called for. It is, therefore, not in the least probable that we can have a regular and sufficient Supply of that Article, in good Preservation, from *Great Britain*; add to this, that it cannot be imported from thence at so low a Price as the *Americans* can afford to sell it. With respect to Packages for transporting our Staples, Experience evinces that they can be got from *America*, not only much cheaper, but of better Quality; those that

that come from *Europe* being very brittle, and apt to crack, so that great Loss is sometimes sustained by the Planter on that Account. As to the Colonies of *Canada*, *Nova Scotia*, and *Saint John's* being able to afford a Supply of Provisions, Lumber, &c. we beg Leave to refer to the annexed Account of Imports from thence (N^o 2.) with this Remark, That soon after the Arrival of the Proclamation of the Second Day of *July*, One thousand Seven hundred and Eighty-three, the Weather being very dry at the Time of Year we expect Rains, created Apprehensions of Scarcity, which led the Assembly to address the Governor again to admit *American* Vessels to Entry for a certain Time: His Excellency refused; but flattered us with Hopes of a very plentiful Supply from those Colonies, as he had written to the several Governors, representing our Situation: *The Accounts referred to, will shew the Benefit we reaped therefrom*; and that, with this promised Plenty, we might have starved, had it not pleased the Almighty soon after to bless us with Rains; which, continuing beyond the usual Time, preserved and brought forward our Crops of Corn.

We have annexed an Account (N^o 3.) of the Imports to this Island from *America* for Seven Years preceding the War; also an Account (N^o 4.) of the Imports from *Canada*, *Nova Scotia*, and *Saint John*: And we beg Leave to point out, from comparing these Accounts, how inadequate those Colonies are to afford a Supply equal to our Demand:—We will not adduce any Observations or Arguments to shew that they *never* will; persuaded that it must be fully evinced to every unprejudiced Mind. But supposing for a Moment those Colonies might *in Time* be able to afford such Supply, can it be the Wish of the Parent State that our Operations should be suspended till that Time arrives? It is possible that we might get supplied with *American* Articles from the *French*, and other neighbouring Islands; but would *Great Britain* be benefited by obliging us to obtain them under the heavy Charge of a circuitous Voyage, double Freight, Insurance, Commissions, and Mercantile Profit? besides the Inconvenience of paying for them in Cash, or Bills of Exchange, instead of our Surplus Rum. It would make but little Difference to the Subjects of the United States; they would find a Vent for their Merchandize; the *intermediate Persons* would be benefited by the Trade, and Your Colonies ruined. But these Evils would only gradually undermine the Interests of your Memorialists, and slowly, though surely, bring on the Destruction of the Planters:—In Cases of Emergency, such as we have mentioned, and such as we have severely felt, our Situation must be dreadful: It would be impossible for *Great Britain* to send us Supplies in Time to relieve our Necessities; the great Distance points this out at first View; but we will represent Two striking Instances, which our Misfortunes afford, that will evince the Difference between an Exclusion of the *American* Trade, and the Permission:—At the Time of the Storm, in One thousand Seven hundred and Eighty, there was a great Quantity of Flour in *Kingston*, far beyond the Demand; the greatest Part of this, even a great deal that was spoiled, was immediately sent to the suffering Parishes, and consumed:

There

There was also a large Quantity of Provisions imported by Government for the Support of the Troops intended for *Pensacola*; a great Part of this was also humanely sent to those Parishes by Governor *Dalling*. Notwithstanding those Two great *accidental* Supplies, a *Famine* ensued, and a great Number of Slaves perished, before any Supply could be obtained of the natural Productions of the Country, or from *Europe*, although immediately sent for after the Storm. The Storm of the Thirtieth Day of *July* last, was nearly as destructive to the Windward Part of the Island, as that of One thousand Seven hundred and Eighty had been to the Leeward; and its Consequences would, in all Probability, have been infinitely more terrible, there being, at the Time it happened, but a small Quantity of Flour in the Country, had not the Humanity and good Policy of our Lieutenant Governor, with the Advice of his Council, led him to permit all Vessels, loaded with Provisions and Lumber, to Entry for a limited Time, as soon as it was made appear to him that the Provisions of the Country were mostly destroyed, in those Parishes that had felt the Severity of the Weather, and that a Famine must have unavoidably ensued without such Permission: This has given us a temporary Supply.

Your Memorialists and Petitioners have shewn the distressed Situation to which this Island is reduced; we have pointed out the ruinous Consequences that must inevitably follow the Measure of a Total Exclusion of the *Americans* from trading to this Island; and we have evinced, from Two striking Instances, grounded on the Locality of the Island, compared with that of *Great Britain* and the United States, that, in Cases of Emergency, the Existence of the Inhabitants of this Colony must depend on an Intercourse of Trade with those States:—So circumstanced, we throw ourselves on Your Majesty's paternal Care, impressed with the highest Degree of Affection and Loyalty to your Person and Government; but, having the Feelings of Men, we are driven to declare, That, although we have hitherto endeavoured to bear Accumulations of Taxation, and other Hardships until lately unheard of, it may not be possible patiently to await the near Approach of actual Famine; we therefore humbly insist, that the Justice of the *British* Legislature will restore us to a reasonable Participation in that Trade which alone can, on many probable Contingencies in future, avert Ruin and Death.

Passed the Assembly,
this Fourth Day of *December*, 1784.
S. W. HAUGHTON, Speaker.

Passed the Council,
the Eleventh Day of *Decr*, 1784.
WM DUNLOP, Cl. Con.

An ACCOUNT of from the Books of the Naval Office.

An ACCOUNT of all I taken from the Books of the Naval Office.

F I S H			Staves and Shingles.	Feet of Lumber.
Rhds.	Tierces.			
753	37	4	301,334	510,088

N° 1

An ACCOUNT of all the SUGAR, RUM, COFFEE, and MELASSES, Exported

			Hhds. Sugar.
From January to December	1768	—	902
	1769	—	1,407
	1770	—	1,958
	1771	—	1,421
	1772	—	1,513
	1773	—	1,513
	1774	—	1,811

N° 2

An ACCOUNT of all IMPORTS from Canada, Nova Scotia, and St John's, between the 3d

F I S H.						
Hhds.	Tierces.	Barrels.	Half Tierces.	Bbls. Oil.	Bbls. Rice.	Shaken Cakes.
753	37	457	39	45	10	710

N^o 1.

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S, Exported from *Jamaica* to *America*, for Seven Years.—Taken from the Books of the Naval Office.

Hind. Sugar.	Pun. Rum.	Cask and Bags Coffee.	Casks Melasses.	Number of Vessels.
902	1,039	589	626	84
407	4,443	971	2,265	140
958	4,513	1,223	1,021	170
421	2,545	1,030	938	141
513	4,294	1,331	753	143
513	7,438	1,001	1,003	184
811	8,660	2,816	902	—

N^o 2.

en the 3d Day of *April* 1783 and the 26th Day of *October* 1784.—Taken from the Books of the Naval Office.

	Bundles of Wood Hoops.	Oars.	Bbls. Potatoes	Matts and Spars.	Slaves and Shingles.	Feet of Lumber.
10	20	100	180	21	301,334	510,088

An ACCOUNT of all IMPORTS into *Jamaica* from *America*

			Ebbs. of Flour.	Ebbs. of Bread.	Bags of Biscuit.	Ebbs. of Rice.	Hhds. of Fish.	Ebbs. of Fish.	Ebbs. of Beef and Pork.	Ebbs. of Oil.	Ebbs. of Pitch, Tar, and Tur- pentine.
From Jan ^y 1 st to Decem ^r 31 st	1768	—	22,620	7,822	2,258	4,211 $\frac{1}{2}$	2,149	2,980	4,781	387	1,550
	1769	—	28,749	10,175	2,468	4,862 $\frac{1}{2}$	3,340	8,028	5,894	863	2,550
	1770	—	37,442	11,203	4,527	15,475	1,607	9,228	5,225	698	1,550
	1771	—	27,103	9,152	3,858	5,744	2,414	9,673	3,630	368	2,000
	1772	—	19,637	9,952	5,208	3,084	2,587	12,575	3,505	616	1,800
	1773	—	30,815	9,430	5,111	5,219	4,152	12,801	2,811 $\frac{1}{2}$	780	1,900
	1774	—	23,610	7,532	4,638	6,898	2,733	12,179	9,152	480	1,100

An ACCOUNT of all IMPORTS into *Jamaica* from *Canada*, *Nova Scotia*, and *St. John*

		Ebbs. Flour.	Hhds. Fish.	Ebbs. of Oil.	Ebbs. of Pitch, Tar, and Turpentine.
From <i>Jan</i> ^y 1768 to <i>Decem</i> ^r 1772	—	163	37	40	15
Annual Average	—	33	7	8	3
For 1773 and 1774	—	—	—	—	—

An ACCOUNT of all IMPORTS

		Hhds. of Fish.	Ebbs. of Oil.
From <i>Jan</i> ^y 1768 to <i>Decem</i> ^r 1772	—	439	28
Annual Average	—	88	6
For 1773 and 1774	—	—	—

N^o 3.

from America, for Seven Years.—Taken from the Books of the Naval Office.

Ebbs. of Oil.	Ebbs. of Pitch, Tar, and Tur- pentine.	Staves and Shin- gles.	Feet of Lumber.	Bunches of Onions.	Wood Hoops.	Hhd. Shakes.	Horses and Cat- tle.	Busbels Salt.	Tons of Iron.	Casks of Hams.	Firkins of But- ter.	Boxes of Soap, and Spermaceti Candles.	Busbels of Corn, Peas, &c.	Vessels.
387	1,564	8,311,069	3,168,539	13,818	11,800	595	135	—	—	—	38	1,832	55,475 ¹ / ₂	197
863	2,527	8,879,810	4,273,894	32,668	2,237	12,000	1,149	—	—	—	53	385	38,853	249
698	1,561	6,918,202	3,406,598	36,220	28,925	2,051	536	—	—	—	303	2,026	37,753	287
368	2,005	6,405,282	3,368,570	19,350	107,150	2,203	548	—	—	—	301	2,217	37,120	264
616	1,881	12,398,282	4,031,105	10,710	118,975	2,231	263	—	—	—	200	2,292	24,870	281
780	1,995	13,980,641	5,245,562	41,600	168,230	3,234	648	—	—	—	497	2,761	42,315	323
480	1,131	11,752,000	4,181,000	36,643	70,700	—	499	9,160	50	411	400	1,215	52,470	299

N^o 4.

and St. John, for the same Years, included in, and to be deducted from, the above Account, N^o 3.

Ebbs. of Pitch, Tar, and Tur- pentine.	Staves and Shin- gles.	Feet of Lumber.
15	180,500	136,175
3	36,100	27,235
—	—	—

Have not been able to obtain a particular Account.

REPORTS from Newfoundland, for the same Time.

Bbbs. of Oil.	Mafts and Spars.
28	300
6	60
—	—

Have not been able to obtain a particular Account.